

Mr Grattan Puxon, 18 October 2004

# SHEFFIELD LAW CENTRE

I am enclosing 2 photographs of  
Tasim Axhami. Paperwork will  
follow on Wednesday.

With thanks, Kathryn Hodder

Waverley House  
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Community  
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## WITH COMPLIMENTS

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Feb 01

**From** : Kathryn Hodder  
**Date** : 20.10.04  
**Re** : Tasim Axhami  
**Message/comments**

Dear Mr Puxon,

I am sending you the above client's  
statement.

I will send you a short letter tomorrow  
as well as anything else which could  
help you. Thanks Kathryn.

If this transmission is unsatisfactory, please phone on 273 1501.

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**Subject:** atten: Kathryn Hodder re AXHAMI

**Date:** Mon, 25 Apr 2005 12:31:03 +0100

**From:** "ustiben.5" <ustiben.5@ntlworld.com>

**Organization:** ustiben

**To:** [post@slc.org.uk](mailto:post@slc.org.uk)

Dear Kathryn Hodder,

As I explained to you on the phone, due to the death of my sister-law and the funeral taking place in Bath this week, I will be unable to attend the Tribunal Hearing for Tasim Axhami on the date set.

However, I am concerned that the dangerous conditions faced by a Rom living in the Presevo Valley, close to the border with Kosovo, at this time should be brought to the attention of the Tribunal and given due weight of consideration.

Yours sincerely  
Grattan Puxon

IN THE IMMIGRATION APPELLATE AUTHORITY

**BRADFORD IAA**

**APPEAL NUMBER: HX/14461/2004**

**26 October 2004**

**Mr Tasim Axjami (Appellant)**

**and**

**Secretary of State for the Home Department (Respondent)**

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**Statement of the Appellant**

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My name is Tasim Axhami. I was born on 28 May 1986.

I was born in Dobrosin village where I lived in a small house with my father. I do not have any sisters or brothers. My mother died of a heart attack on 7 January 1993 when I was six years old.

Dobrosin is in Serbia and Montenegro. It is not in Kosovo although it is quite close to the border with Kosovo. The nearest town is Bujanovac. It is about 10-20 minutes away.

Both Serbs and Albanians lived in Dobrosin. It is a big village, probably with 200-300 houses.

I knew that there was fighting going on where I lived and the surrounding area. All the time you would hear that a neighbouring village had been attacked and for example two people had been killed. Then two or three weeks later you would hear something like that again. Most fights took place in the area between Presevo and Bujanovac. There were guerrillas living in the mountains who attacked the police and the military. Serbs would go and get them and there would be fights. Sometimes there were fights every day. It got worse in the last few years.

My family were gypsies. The family moved around before my parents went to live in Dobrosin. My grandfather had lived like that - moving around. My father and mother went to live in Dobrosin because my father wanted to have a home and be like other people. There was one other gypsy family in Dobrosin but they moved.

Everyone could tell that we were gypsies from looking at us. They knew from when we first went to live in Dobrosin that we were gypsies. I would use the word gypsy to describe myself - not Roma.

I never went to school. Only Serb children went to school. It was not safe for me and for Albanian children to go to school. We went to the home of an Albanian teacher who taught us in her house. When I left Dobrosin I was still going to school although it was the holidays.

It was difficult to have friends being a gypsy. The only friends I had were those that I went to school with.

My family was always taunted for being gypsies. My father spoke Romany but I don't. He didn't want me to learn it. I think that he tried to live with Albanian people and forget that we were gypsies. I used to ask him for some words in

Romany, for example some swear words, but he would never tell me any Romany at all. We didn't have any religion.

People used to swear and insult us all the time. They shouted things like "this village is not for gypsies". The immediate neighbours were OK because we had known them for years.

My father spoke Albanian with a hard accent. His Albanian was not so good. He did not speak Serb because if he did he would have had a problem with the Albanians.

My father had some type of job. I don't know what it was. He carried a gun. I think he did some sort of police job or military job but he didn't wear a uniform. He went out about six days a week, not always at the same time and came back at different times – three, four or six. I think he went to Bujanovac. I think he sometimes went in a car with his friends or got a bus. The buses are not like they are here.

I think my father sometimes saw his friends before he came home. I think that his friends were Albanian but I am not sure. I did see him talking to Serbs sometimes although I don't think that he spoke Serb.

My father was killed on 28 August 2002. It was the evening and we were both at home. A man shouted his name from the gate. He went outside to see who it was. About 10 minutes later I heard him screaming.

I went out and he was on the floor. He had been stabbed in his front. He was nearly dead. The men were going. I think there was one inside the gate and two outside.

I shouted and screamed. I ran for help to a neighbour's house but it was too late. A male neighbour took me to his house. I was there for about an hour.

We both agreed that there was no point in asking for help because we were gypsies. Most people did not go to the police there.

The neighbour said that I should leave because I could be next. He said that he would give me some money for my father's house. He gave me DM 1,500 for the house. It was worth much more than that.

I do not know what happened to my father's body. I do not suppose that he had a proper funeral. I was scared of the men who killed my father. They might think that I know something or that I saw them.

The neighbour's son took me to Pristina in Kosovo in his car that night and left me there. I stayed there for one night. Then I went to Macedonia. I went on the coach and walked. I ended up in a town called Gostivar where I slept outside in the garden of a mosque.

Eventually an Albanian man who lived round there asked me what I was doing sleeping outside. He said to me that I should go and find somewhere safe. He was about 50. He was trying to help me and being kind to me because I was sleeping outside. He said that he knew someone who would take me to where I would be safe.

I gave him the rest of my money – about DM 1,000. He arranged for me to leave in a lorry. I didn't know where I was going. I didn't know anything about England. The lorry took several days and brought me to Sheffield. I think that the lorry was going to a factory. I got in the back of the lorry and did not get out of it at all until I arrived in Sheffield. I did not talk to the lorry driver at all.



I was 16 when I arrived in Sheffield on 30 October 2002. I lived on the streets until I found out how to claim asylum.

When I first came here I was very depressed. I was sent to the Asylum Health Clinic. I was given psychotherapy for around a year and took anti-depressant tablets.

I had a legal representative who I saw in November 2002 when I arrived here. I now understand that:

1. My former legal representative never told the Home Office that I am a gypsy.
2. The Home Office believes that I am from Kosovo but I am not from Kosovo. I have never said that I am from Kosovo.
3. The Home Office has been told that my father was killed on 28 October 2002 - when he was killed on 28 August 2002. This has made the Home office disbelieve my story.

When I became 18, the Home Office asked my former legal representative if I wished to have an interview. My previous representative advised me that I did not need to go. My legal representative also advised me to withdraw my asylum appeal.

I am frightened that I would be killed like my father if I went back. I do not know who killed him, whether they were Serbs or Albanians. I am also frightened because I am a gypsy and I would be insulted, attacked and discriminated against because of this. I would not be able to get a job or a house.